

DD/P 2-3813

Executive Registry

8-1434

11 April 1956

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The Honorable Robert A. Lovett
c/o Brown Brothers, Harriman & Company
79 Wall Street
New York, New York

Dear Bob:

It was a great pleasure to all of us to see and talk with you once again as we were able to do last week. All of us within the Agency who know you are looking forward with great anticipation to your playing an important role in support of our efforts. We feel that we are carrying quite a heavy burden of responsibility and at the same time are facing an unusually heavy barrage of criticism from various quarters. It is, accordingly, a very encouraging "shot in the arm" for us to have the realization at this time of your interest.

Because of your former, and presumably continuing, interest in the Italian situation, I am enclosing a copy of a report concerning the outcome of the shop steward elections of the Fiat Company in Turin and I invite your attention in particular to the very encouraging growth of strength of the free unions and the remarkable losses of the Communists over the seven-year period beginning in 1948. I had intended to refer to this development in my portion of the presentation to your Board when certain "interruptions" occurred which precluded this.

The outcome of the Turin shop steward elections may have a much wider significance than is yet to be attributed to it by American observers. For example, a review of the Austrian press for the period 22 March-1 April revealed that most papers gave front page space to the "sensational success" of the Christian Democratic trade unions in these shop steward elections in Turin. One of the leading papers (Neue Zeitung) went so far as to say that these elections "proved that the march of Marxism in the northern Italian industrial area, which was once held to be irresistible, can be turned into retreat." Another (Der Kleine Volksblatt) carried an editorial on "victory in Turin" declaring that the election outcome showed "the growing dissatisfaction of the masses with Marxism" and asserted that a similar deterioration of the Marxist front is also apparent in Austria. Although we realize that these and similar observations appearing

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elections may be overstatements, dictated to a degree by wishful thinking, it seems clear that the Turin elections have not gone unnoticed in Western Europe and that useful interpretations have been placed upon the results.

Polly has asked to be remembered to you and Adele and hopes to see you again on the occasion of your next visit here.

Sincerely,

(Signed) FRANK O. WISNER
Frank O. Wisner

Enclosure:

Copy of "The Steward Elections
at Fiat, S.p.A., Torino"

DDP/FGW:mc (11 Apr 56)

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